

# **Relationships Between Political Development and Intervention**

**A Monograph  
by  
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The Democratic Republic of the Congo (the Congo) received its independence from Belgium on 30 June 1960. The Congo's political development from the 1700s to 1960 resulted in a democratically elected Congolese administration that at the time of independence was unable to operate the national government or the economy. As a result, the Congo became a failing state within days of gaining independence. Beginning with King Leopold II's reign over the Congo in 1885 and continuing under the administrations of President Joseph Mobutu, President Laurent Kabila, and President Joseph Kabila, successive Congolese administrations employed four governing practices that undermined the country's stability. Congolese administrations relied upon foreign political support to retain power. They used private international companies to fulfill many security and economic functions. They manipulated ethnic differences within their populations to maintain control, and they used the state's resources to increase their own personal wealth and power at the expense of the Congo's larger social well being. These governing practices have both helped and thwarted international interventions into the Congo since 1960.

Between 1960 and 2005, the United Nations, the international community, and various African states launched interventions into the Congo. The intervening entities used a combination of military, political, and economic means to stabilize the Congo. The interventions varied in their use of opportunities made available by the Congo's state of political development. Examples of such opportunities included the widespread public support for democratic rule, the presence of a democratically elected administration, and the Congo's dependence on foreign aid. Most of the interventions ignored existing opportunities to improve the stability of the Congo's government and instead pursued the national interests of the intervening entities, often to the detriment of the larger Congolese population. Interventions into the Congo between 1960 and 2005 illustrate a number of characteristics of foreign interventions into failing states. First, the root causes of instability that necessitate an intervention are oftentimes rooted in the host country's political development. The governing practices of successive Congolese governments undermined the country's stability and necessitated international intervention. Secondly, competing national interests of the intervening entities can stand in the way of making meaningful reforms to the host nation's government. Thirdly, steps to bring about stability in a failing country can take place despite the international intervention as opposed to because of it. The 1999 United Nations intervention coincided with several political, social, and military decisions that culminated in a transitional government of national unity. These decisions were largely independent of the United Nations intervention activities. Finally, interventions into the Congo demonstrate that the international community easily reaches consensus on the need to end violent conflict in a host country. However, it is difficult to reach international consensus on how to repair the national government once hostilities end.

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## **Abstract**

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The Democratic Republic of the Congo (the Congo) received its independence from Belgium on 30 June 1960. The Congo's political development from the 1700s to 1960 resulted in a democratically elected Congolese administration that at the time of independence was unable to operate the national government or the economy. As a result, the Congo became a failing state within days of gaining independence. Beginning with King Leopold II's reign over the Congo in 1885 and continuing under the administrations of President Joseph Mobutu, President Laurent Kabila, and President Joseph Kabila, successive Congolese administrations employed four governing practices that undermined the country's stability. Congolese administrations relied upon foreign political support to retain power. They used private international companies to fulfill many security and economic functions. They manipulated ethnic differences within their populations to maintain control, and they used the state's resources to increase their own personal wealth and power at the expense of the Congo's larger social well being. These governing practices have both helped and thwarted international interventions into the Congo since 1960.

Between 1960 and 2005, the United Nations, the international community, and various African states launched interventions into the Congo. The intervening entities used a combination of military, political, and economic means to stabilize the Congo. The interventions varied in their use of opportunities made available by the Congo's state of political development. Examples of such opportunities included the widespread public support for democratic rule, the presence of a democratically elected administration, and the Congo's dependence on foreign aid. Most of the interventions ignored existing opportunities to improve the stability of the Congo's government and instead pursued the national interests of the intervening entities, often to the detriment of the larger Congolese population. Interventions into the Congo between 1960 and 2005 illustrate a number of characteristics of foreign interventions into failing states. First, the root causes of instability that necessitate an intervention are oftentimes rooted in the host country's political development. The governing practices of successive Congolese governments undermined the country's stability and necessitated international intervention. Secondly, competing national interests of the intervening entities can stand in the way of making meaningful reforms to the host nation's government. Thirdly, steps to bring about stability in a failing country can take place despite the international intervention as opposed to because of it. The 1999 United Nations intervention coincided with several political, social, and military decisions that culminated in a transitional government of national unity. These decisions were largely independent of the United Nations intervention activities. Finally, interventions into the Congo demonstrate that the international community easily reaches consensus on the need to end violent conflict in a host country. However, it is difficult to reach international consensus on how to repair the national government once hostilities end.

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## Introduction

On 2 July 1960, United Nations forces entered the Democratic Republic of the Congo (the Congo) to affect the withdrawal of Belgian paratroopers, maintain the international borders of the Congo, reestablish law and order, and establish political and economic stability. The United Nations forces departed the Congo four years later. The United Nations mission succeeded in removing Belgian military forces and maintained the international borders of the Congo.<sup>1</sup> However, the intervention failed to establish law and order, and failed to establish political and economic stability. The 1960 intervention failed to achieve these latter two mission objectives because its ambitious aims and strategy ignored the historical development of governance in the Congo. The governing practices of the Congo's 1960 government and the government's administrative organizations had been developed over a span of centuries. Over time, many of these governing practices became institutionalized and were resistant to United Nations efforts to change them. The United Nations intervention sought to accomplish the objectives stated in the *United States Joint Forces Command Stability Operations Joint Operating Concept*. These objectives include establishing security; facilitating reconciliation among local and regional adversaries; establishing political, social, and economic architecture; and facilitating transition to legitimate governance.<sup>2</sup> Like the 1960 United Nations intervention into the Congo, military interventions into failing states cannot accomplish these objectives without recognizing and accounting for the host country's history and the evolution of its governing organizations.

The processes of intervention and political development are interdependent. States or international entities such as the United Nations or the African Union<sup>3</sup> plan and initiate interventions into the politics of failing states in order to assist an overwhelmed government, to

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<sup>1</sup>Gordon King, *The United Nations in the Congo: A Quest for Peace* (New York, NY: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1962), 10-12.

<sup>2</sup>United States Department of Defense, *Stability Operations Joint Operating Concept* (Washington, DC: Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2004), 2-3.

<sup>3</sup>The African Union will be referred to as the Organization of African States for the remainder of this document.

establish governance where none is present, or to oppose an established government. The United Nations intervened in the Congo because the Congolese government was overwhelmed and on the brink of collapse. As the United Nations intervention progressed, the Congo's government resisted some of the intervention's major objectives. For example, in 1960 the United Nations considered retraining the Congo's army to be an important prerequisite to restoring law and order. However, the Congo's government vehemently opposed such retraining. Conversely, encouraging the indigenous population to establish a workable constitution was a prerequisite to establishing political and economic stability. Instead, the United Nations imposed an unpopular constitution on the Congo in 1961, and in the end, the country's government became a dictatorship. The Congo government's openness to a new constitution and its refusal to allow retraining of the armed forces were the result of the Congo's unique government history.

The process of political development explains the behavior of a host government and identifies opportunities for intervening entities to achieve political objectives in cooperation with the host government. Because international intervention and political development are interrelated, the success of an intervention depends in large part on creating favorable opportunities for political action. While intervention can create opportunities for progress, creating opportunities is an expensive and unpredictable affair, as demonstrated by the 1960 United Nations action. Those planning to intervene in a failing state would be well served to recognize where emergent opportunities may lie, and prepare their organizations to quickly capitalize on such opportunities. The Congo's political history, the 1960 United Nations intervention into the Congo, various interventions between 1965 and 1998, and the 1999 United Nations intervention into the Congo illustrate the interdependent processes of political development and international assistance.



## Colonial Governance Development (1700-1960)

Over the past three centuries, the Congo has institutionalized four destructive governing practices. From 1885 through 2005, Congolese government leaders relied upon foreign political support to retain power. These leaders used private international companies to fulfill many security and economic functions. They manipulated ethnic differences within their populations to maintain control, and they used the state's resources to increase their own personal wealth and power at the expense of the Congo's larger social well being. These actions enabled Congolese leaders to control the government without being accountable to the general population. The Congo's natural resources provided to the Congo's elite significant profits and left the average citizen impoverished, diseased, and endangered by perpetual armed conflict. Over the past one-hundred and twenty years, the institutionalization of these behaviors made the Congo an unstable state characterized by weak administrative institutions, politics dominated by competition for control of natural resources, and frequent manipulation by regional and foreign governments. These governing practices developed and continued as Belgium relinquished control of the Belgian Congo to an independent democratic government in 1960. They have been in practice for over a century and are difficult to change.

The Congo's most recent experience with stable indigenous governance was between 1400 and 1483. By the fifteenth century, the hundreds of tribes that inhabited what is now called the Congo established stable, independent tribal communities that engaged in long-distance trade.<sup>4</sup> According to Robert Edgerton, fifteenth century tribes in the Congo had little crime, steady population growth, prospering institutions, and expanding religious practices.<sup>5</sup> "Despite warfare and the ravages of tropical disease . . . most people's lives appear to have been

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<sup>4</sup>Sandra W. Meditz and Tim Merrill, *Zaire: A Country Study*, 4th ed. (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1994), xxxvi.

<sup>5</sup>Robert B. Edgerton, *The Troubled Heart of Africa: A History of the Congo* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002), 6-11.

rewarding.”<sup>6</sup> The Kongo and Luba people of the southern savannas developed into large and cohesive states.<sup>7</sup> These characteristics of fifteenth century Congolese tribes demonstrate that their governments established stable, secure, and cohesive communities that shared the community’s prosperity with the larger population.

While stable, these fifteenth century tribal communities did not resemble fifteenth century communities in Europe. The differences between African and European community organization contributed to the weakening of tribal governments and the rise of destructive patterns of governance in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. European communities consolidated into centralized states that combined different tribes, religious beliefs, and traditions into a single state polity. Centralized government provided European communities several advantages when they encountered African communities. In contrast, pre-colonial Congolese societies were decentralized.

One reason why seventeenth century Congo communities never centralized was the historical pattern of African warfare. Jeffrey Herbst describes the contrast between warfare in Africa and Europe:

In Africa, the primary object of warfare, which was continual in many places, was to capture people and treasure, not land which was available to all. In contrast to European states that, at least at some points in their histories, needed to mobilize tremendous resources from their own populations to fight wars and were, therefore, forced to develop profound ties with their own hinterlands, pre-colonial African leaders mainly exploited people outside their own polity because the point of war was to take women, cattle, and slaves.<sup>8</sup>

European states sought to develop profound ties between their urban and rural communities, which in turn tended to centralize their governments. By the mid-eighteenth century, most European states had centralized governments that exercised authority within their borders. A major reason for the growth of Europe’s centralized state governments was the continual threat of war between the communities of Europe. This threat had arisen because growing populations in

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 7.

<sup>7</sup>Meditz and Merrill, xxxvi.

<sup>8</sup>Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 20.

Europe increased competition for territory. Strong central governments enabled the pooling of societal resources and had three important effects on European governance. First, strong central governments replaced decentralized feudal governments--combining peoples of different religious beliefs, ethnicities, and traditions into a single polity. Second, strong central governments imposed interdependencies between urban and agrarian communities that fostered economic growth and ethnic integration within the state's borders. Finally, strong central governments enabled the state to conquer territory and still maintain sufficient resources to control and exploit the conquered lands.<sup>9</sup> These three effects enabled the communities of Europe to develop into states with strong central governments. In Africa, governance evolved differently.

In contrast to the centralizing effect warfare had on European institutions, the Congolese experience with warfare gave its pre-colonial societies no incentive to exchange the numerous tribal institutions for fewer centralized ones. While, centralized institutions were a necessity for European state development, they were largely unnecessary in pre-colonial Congolese society. Because rival tribes were dispersed throughout the Congo's vast landscape and often separated by inhospitable terrain, tribal leaders effectively pursued their wars without creating centralized institutions. Absent of outside pressures, pre-colonial Congo communities did not become the strong and centralized states found in Europe.

The difference between Congolese and European political development enabled European entrepreneurs to be militarily and economically stronger than the Congolese tribes they encountered. This was the case in 1483 when the Portuguese opened trade with the Kongo Kingdom. The Portuguese provided technical assistance, missionaries, corn, cassava, and tobacco in exchange for ivory, and copperwares. In the eighteenth century, more European countries traded with Congolese communities; much of that trade was in slaves.<sup>10</sup> While much of this trade was voluntary, European traders did not hesitate to use military power to influence trade

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 13-15.

<sup>10</sup>Meditz and Merrill, xvi, 10-12.

negotiations. The strength and effectiveness of many tribal governments decreased as trade with Europe increased in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The economic interests of European states superseded the Congolese tribal interests. European decisions that began the colonial era in the mid-nineteenth century made it unlikely that the Congo would develop indigenous centralized institutions.

In the spring of 1872, Henry Morton Stanley became famous throughout Europe for exploring the Congo River and the dense forests beyond its shores. In 1878, his expeditions attracted the attention of King Leopold II. King Leopold sought to establish a colony on the resource-rich African continent.<sup>11</sup> Working together, King Leopold and Stanley lobbied the governments of Europe and the United States to obtain control of the rich lands surrounding the Congo River for Belgium. With the purported cooperation of indigenous tribal chiefs, King Leopold formed the International Association of the Congo to administer these lands and appointed himself as the Association's President.<sup>12</sup> After seven years of lobbying, King Leopold and Stanley achieved their goal. In 1885, the thirteen most powerful European countries met to divide the African continent among them. These thirteen countries formed the 1885 Conference of Berlin, which recognized King Leopold as the sovereign of the International Association of the Congo.<sup>13</sup>

King Leopold had gained sovereignty over the International Association of the Congo and had subdued the indigenous populations of the Congo. King Leopold gained control of the International Association of the Congo because he said the territory would offer freedom of commerce to all foreign countries.<sup>14</sup> The Conference of Berlin member countries thought they were giving their approval to an international colony that, while controlled by Belgium, would be

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<sup>11</sup>Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998), 61.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, 78.

<sup>13</sup>Meditz and Merrill, 13-16.

<sup>14</sup>Hochschild, 78.

open to traders throughout Europe. Upon gaining control of the International Association of the Congo, King Leopold named himself the Congo's King-Sovereign and made a clear distinction between his role as King of Belgium and his role as personal sovereign of the Congo. On 29 May 1885, King Leopold renamed his new, privately controlled country the Congo Free State.<sup>15</sup>

King Leopold's sovereignty over the Congo Free State placed hundreds of tribes and kingdoms under his control. To manage these communities, he established a central government in the Congo, manned by a corps of fifteen hundred European administrators. He also developed a transportation network in the Congo.<sup>16</sup> While he told the international community that he was providing wise government and public services to his Congolese population, King Leopold "treated the Congo as if it were just a piece of uninhabited real estate to be disposed of by its owner."<sup>17</sup> King Leopold's personal pursuit of wealth drove the activities of his administration, and introduced destructive governing practices that future Congolese leaders would emulate for the next one hundred and twenty-five years. Instead of forming centralized administrative agencies that met the needs of indigenous populations, King Leopold focused his administrative activities on extracting resources. Adam Hochschild chronicles King Leopold's governing style in his book *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa*. He reports that between the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as many as ten million Congolese--roughly half the population at that time--died unnecessarily: either murdered by state officials or killed by starvation, exhaustion, exposure, or disease.<sup>18</sup> King Leopold exhibited his indifference to public well being by inflicting these hardships on the Congo's people in order to quickly and profitably extract ivory and rubber from the country.

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 86-87.

<sup>16</sup>United States Agency for International Development, *Integrated Strategic Plan FY 2004-2008*, 2 March 2004, 2. Available from [http://pdf.dec.org/pdf\\_docs/PDABZ455.pdf](http://pdf.dec.org/pdf_docs/PDABZ455.pdf), Internet, Accessed on 23 February 2006.

<sup>17</sup>Hochschild, 101.

<sup>18</sup>United States Agency for International Development, 2.

King Leopold enlisted the assistance of the private international entities to perform the difficult task of extracting rubber and ivory from the Congo Free State. In September 1885, King Leopold issued a number of decrees designating the territory of the Congo vacant land. He divided the vacant lands into blocks that he leased to private companies as concessions. The concession company's shareholders were largely Belgian, and their directorates included high Congo state officials. The state, which was synonymous with King Leopold, always kept fifty percent of the profits. This practice soon became commonplace. King Leopold, his allies, and favored indigenous elites profited greatly from the foreign financial extraction. The colonial state monopolized resource extraction. Government officials and troops excluded businesses that did not conform to the concession company model. The indigenous people employed to collect the ivory received food, clothes, and beads as payment.<sup>19</sup> Congolese administrations for the next one hundred and twenty-five years used private foreign entities to extract resources.

King Leopold used government troops to maintain control of indigenous populations. King Leopold and Stanley used African mercenaries to explore the Congo from 1877 to 1885. In 1888, he formed these mercenaries into a national army called the Force Publique. By 1900, the Force Publique grew to be the most powerful army in central Africa. It had more than nineteen thousand officers and soldiers and consumed more than half of the state's budget. Its many functions included counter guerilla operations, occupation of resource rich areas, and control of the labor force. Typically, several dozen black soldiers served under one or two white officers. To maintain control of tribal populations, the Force Publique often allied itself with one tribal group to defeat another. After the latter was defeated, the Force Publique would defeat the former. Post-colonial Congolese military forces employed the same patterns of shifting alliances and manipulation of ethnic conflicts.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 117-119.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 127-128.

King Leopold's position as the ruler of Belgium enabled him to use Belgian resources to control and govern the Congo. These foreign resources ensured that King Leopold was not accountable to the Congolese population. The Leopold government's reliance upon foreign political support to maintain control of the Congo was another practice Congolese leaders continued after colonial rule. However, while King Leopold was not accountable to the Congolese people, he was accountable to the international community. Christian missionaries from Africa, Europe, and America brought the brutality of King Leopold's regime to the world's attention.<sup>21</sup> By 1908, international opinion, led by Britain and the United States, demanded an end to King Leopold's sovereignty over the Congo. On 15 November 1908, Belgium annexed the Free Congo State, which by this time had been renamed the Belgian Congo.<sup>22</sup>

King Leopold died the following year. Although King Leopold's death ended his exploitation of the Congo, Belgium did not institute any substantive administrative reforms in the territory for four years.<sup>23</sup> The Belgian parliament was initially unprepared to administer a colony that was four times the size of Belgium.<sup>24</sup> The Belgian government did try to improve the conditions of the Congolese population, for example by providing education to Congolese children. However, indigenous Congolese were not permitted to advance beyond the primary school.<sup>25</sup> In running the economy, the Belgian administration of the Congo continued many of the exploitative governing practices initiated by King Leopold. King Leopold's destructive governing practices had become institutionalized and continued under Belgian rule. In 1908, the Belgian government did not support creation of an independent Congo under indigenous rule. By February 1960, revolts within the country had caused the Belgian government to reverse its position and agree to an independent Congo. However, the Congolese population was not

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<sup>21</sup>Edgerton, 113.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 153-158.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Ernest W. Lefever, *Crisis in the Congo: A United Nations Force in Action* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1965), 9.

prepared for democratic self-rule. There were no Congolese educated to lead such a government. Many of the one hundred and twenty political parties were openly hostile to each other. The country's ethnic groups were at odds. Despite these challenges, the Belgian Congo became an independent state in 1960.<sup>26</sup>

King Leopold's twenty-two years reign in the Congo was characterized by four practices. First, his rule depended upon foreign support. The countries comprising the Conference of Berlin granted King Leopold sovereignty over the Belgian Congo without the consent of the indigenous population. King Leopold maintained control over the Congo by importing weapons and personnel to administer the Congo and lead the Force Publique. Secondly, King Leopold used ethnic manipulation to manage the Congo's tribal populations. His divide and rule strategy created ethnic tensions that continued to 2006. Thirdly, King Leopold's government relied upon private international corporations to harvest ivory and rubber, manage commercial plots, and maintain control of tribal populations. The reliance on private international entities to fulfill these functions prevented the indigenous population from developing the capability to organize and manage these functions. Finally, King Leopold was indifferent to the living conditions of the Congo's population. Approximately half of the native population died under King Leopold's rule while he extracted rubber and ivory from the Congo. King Leopold's administration was the Congo's first experience with centralized government. Subsequent administrations followed King Leopold's governance model.

### **Opportunities and ONUC (1960-1964)**

On 30 June 1960, the Belgian Congo became the Republic of the Congo. Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba and President Joseph Kasavubu won parliamentary elections and led the first indigenous national government in the Congo's history.<sup>27</sup> Four days later, enlisted soldiers of the

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<sup>26</sup>Edgerton, 183-184.

<sup>27</sup>Meditz and Merrill, 28.



National Army of the Congo (ANC) mutinied against their European officers.<sup>28</sup> As the mutiny spread throughout the country, the mineral-rich Katanga province seceded, the diamond-rich Kasai province seceded, and Belgium deployed paratroopers to restore order. These events began what is commonly referred to as the first Congo crisis. On 12 July 1960, President Kasavubu requested United Nations military assistance “in the face of Belgian aggression and Katangan secession.”<sup>29</sup> The United Nations Security Council supported President Kasavubu’s request for assistance and formed the United Nations Operation in the Congo (ONUC). Within two days, twenty thousand United Nations military troops began to arrive in the Congo with a mission to ensure the withdrawal of Belgian troops, maintain the territorial integrity of the Congo, reestablish law and order, and establish political and economic stability in the Congo.<sup>30</sup>

Colonial rule in the Congo from 1700 to 1960 had resulted in creating a newly independent state with untrained leadership. The state was reliant upon Belgian expertise and participation to operate the government and provide its public services. The United Nations intervened in 1960 in order to prevent the Congo crisis from causing a collapse of the new Congolese government. During the 1960 ONUC action, the United Nations encountered opportunities to quickly advance some intervention objectives and obstacles that prevented completion of other objectives. The Congo crisis presented an opportunity for the international community to assist the Congo in developing the capability to govern, to protect international interests, and to achieve regional stability. For the Soviet Union, a United Nations intervention would help complete the Congo’s decolonization and provide an opportunity for the communist-leaning Prime Minister Lumumba to align the Congo with other communist states. For the United States, the United Nations intervention could prevent the Soviet Union from expanding its influence in Central Africa without risking a military confrontation between United States and

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<sup>28</sup>Lefever, 1-6.

<sup>29</sup>Meditz and Merrill, xviii.

<sup>30</sup>King, 17-24.

Soviet military forces. The intervention was also an opportunity for the United States to support Western economic interests in the Congo. Great Britain, Portugal, and France saw the United Nations intervention as an opportunity to prevent the Congo crisis from creating regional instability that would threaten their control of neighboring colonial territories. Belgium had significant political and economic interests in its former colony. Finally, former colonial states such as Algeria, Egypt, Ghana, Nigeria, and India saw the United Nations intervention as an opportunity to champion anti-colonialism. The Congo crisis presented a number of opportunities to the international community, leading to unanimous member nation support for a United Nations mission to the Congo.<sup>31</sup> However, once the intervention began only a few opportunities to advance stability presented themselves. Instead of capitalizing on these few opportunities, the United Nations fell victim to Cold War tensions. Member nation resolve declined as each state pursued its own national policy goals. National maneuvering proved costly because the United Nations mission lost its neutrality, which undermined cooperation among the indigenous and foreign actors and increased the number of mission objectives.

United Nations Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld placed ONUC's military and civilian activities under the control of his secretariat. Secretary-General Hammarskjöld began the intervention in July 1960 with the intent of ending the ANC mutiny and restoring law and order to the Congo. Since Prime Minister Lumumba's government was concerned that the United Nations might impose a trusteeship upon the Congo,<sup>32</sup> there was no opportunity for United Nations forces to disarm and retrain the ANC without losing the support of the Lumumba government. The secession of the Katanga province did provide an opportunity for the ONUC to advance stability in that part of the Congo.

President Moïse Tshombe was the elected president of the secessionist Katanga province. In spite of the secession, he had allies among the Belgian political and economic elites in Katanga

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 17-21.

and Belgium. As Belgian paratroopers withdrew from the country in July and August of 1960, President Tshombe formed the Katangan Gendarmerie consisting of indigenous Katangan enlisted personnel, Belgian officers,<sup>33</sup> and Western mercenary groups. The Katangan Gendarmerie provided Katanga with external defense against the ANC and internal law enforcement. The Katangan Gendarmerie “was better disciplined and more combat capable than the ANC.” In light of the ANC’s military inferiority to the Katangan Gendarmerie, Prime Minister Lumumba requested that ONUC forcibly remove President Tshombe’s secessionist government in Katanga along with their Belgian supporters. Secretary-General Hammarskjöld preferred to focus ONUC actions on establishing law and order while convincing the Belgian officers and supporters to depart without confrontation.<sup>34</sup> Supporting Prime Minister Lumumba’s request could have strengthened the Congo’s democratically elected leader while preserving the territorial integrity of the Congo. However, Prime Minister Lumumba’s administration received financial and other support from the Soviet Union. Empowering Lumumba could have allowed the Soviet Union to gain influence in Central Africa.<sup>35</sup>

As stated above, Cold War politics prevented ONUC from seizing this opportunity to stabilize the Congo under its legitimately elected government. In conjunction with the United States Eisenhower administration, Secretary-General Hammarskjöld created an opportunity where none existed. In September 1960, the moderate President Kasavubu dismissed Prime Minister Lumumba due to Prime Minister Lumumba’s support of genocidal measures to end the secession of the diamond-rich Kasai province and for the failure to end ANC abuses of the civilian population. Prime Minister Lumumba refused to leave his post and a power struggle between the president and prime minister ensued. Colonel Joseph Desire Mobutu, ANC chief of staff abducted Prime Minister Lumumba in September 1960. ONUC did nothing to prevent the

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 33-34.

<sup>34</sup>Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo: From Leopold to Kabila, A People’s History* (New York, NY: Zed Books, 2002), 113.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 106-112.

abduction of the prime minister or to prevent Colonel Mobutu from delivering the prime minister to enemies in Katanga. By December of 1960, Prime Minister Lumumba was tortured and assassinated in Katanga. By allowing the demise of Prime Minister Lumumba, the Secretary-General Hammarskjöld crippled Soviet ambitions to establish a communist-aligned Congo. The price of this action was a loss of ONUC neutrality, alienation of some members of the ANC, alienation of the Soviet Union, and an expansion of ONUC mission requirements. Lumumba's assassination intensified Soviet support for the Lumumbists and "provoked an anticolonialist outcry around the world."<sup>36</sup> ONUC now had to contend with the Katangan secession and a new Lumumbist rebellion.

In the summer of 1961, the United States Kennedy administration and ONUC helped establish a new Congolese administration under Prime Minister Cyrille Abdoulla. ONUC forces created a neutral zone between ANC forces loyal to Abdoulla and forces loyal to the Lumumbist rebellion. Despite pressure from the Kennedy administration to avoid coercive force, Secretary-General Hammarskjöld launched offensive campaigns in August and September 1961 to end the Katangan secession. The offensives expelled or captured the majority of Belgian officers and mercenaries that supported President Tshombe's secessionist government. Secretary-General Hammarskjöld was enroute to ceasefire talks with President Tshombe when the Secretary-General's plane crashed and all aboard died. Myanmar U Thant of Burma succeeded Hammarskjöld as Secretary-General and led peace talks during a one-year cease-fire. During the talks, the United Nations, President Adoula, President Tshombe, and the United States discussed a new constitution for the Congo. President Tshombe eventually rejected the planned constitution because it did not provide sufficient provincial autonomy for Katanga. President Tshombe's willingness to support a new national constitution was an opportunity to build a sustainable Congolese government. The United Nations did not capitalize on the opportunity and instead

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<sup>36</sup>King, 14-15.

chose to create an opportunity through renewed military action. On Christmas Eve 1962, ONUC launched a final offensive on the Katanga capital of Elizabethville. The Katangan government surrendered in 1963.<sup>37</sup>

The ONUC intervention succeeded in maintaining the territorial integrity of the Congo and in removing Belgian troops from the Congo while avoiding an armed conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. ONUC also helped to maintain order and to deter tribal strife in areas where its units were deployed. ONUC did nothing, however, about the equally serious challenge to the authority of the Congo's government posed by the Communist-supported rebel movements of 1964. ONUC did not succeed in what was perhaps its most important assignment--the training and reorganization of the Congolese army. As a result, the army was almost as irresponsible and unreliable after four years of peacekeeping as it was when the first United Nations soldier set foot on Congolese soil.<sup>38</sup>

The Congo's political situation offered only a few opportunities for the United Nations to meaningfully promote national and regional stability. The first opportunity was the request by President Kasavubu for military assistance to suppress the ANC mutiny and the Katanga secession. The other major opportunity was President Tshombe's support for a federal constitution. Supporting the Lumumba administration or helping establish a new democratic administration could have helped establish political and economic stability in the Congo. It could have also reduced the tribal tensions by providing the population with a democratic forum to work out their ethnic grievances. Supporting a federal system with greater autonomy for the provinces could have encouraged democracy in the new Congolese state. The United Nations did not take advantage of these opportunities.

By doing nothing to prevent Prime Minister Lumumba's assassination, the United Nations reduced the resolve of its member states. Soviet support to the United Nations effort

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., 14-17.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 179.

ended. Third world governments around the world demanded that the Katanga government's removal, and pressure grew for the ONUC mission to end. There was not enough United Nations support to enable ONUC to make any meaningful reforms to the Congo's political or economic systems. Once the Katangan secession was defeated, the United Nations forces departed the country. The United Nations had failed to exploit the initial support for intervention by instituting political changes. When events turned against United Nations goals and United Nations inaction permitted further deterioration of the political and military situation, the United Nations members abandoned the mission. Thus, despite United Nations intervention, the promise of democracy initiated with independence in 1960 was soon forgotten, and the government of the Congo returned to one-man rule.

### **Mobutu and Governance Development (1965-1997)**

The last United Nations forces withdrew from the Congo on 30 June 1964. The ONUC intervention had kept the Congo out of the communist bloc and had maintained the pre-crisis borders of the Congo. It did not advance democracy in the Congo or enable the government departments to provide for the needs of the Congolese population. ONUC's departure left the Abdoula government to face communist-sponsored rebel groups on its own. The United States Johnson administration was not confident of Prime Minister Abdoula's ability to withstand communist threats, and instead placed its faith in the ANC chief of staff, the newly promoted General Joseph Désiré Mobutu.<sup>39</sup> With the help of Belgium and France, the United States supported General Mobutu in a successful coup on 24 November 1965. The thirty-five year old new president of the Congo had firm control of the ANC and strong backing from the United States, France, and Belgium. President Mobutu initially established a military dictatorship with the army high command making up the junta. Within a few years, he used bribery, patronage,

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<sup>39</sup>General Mobutu changed his name to Mobutu Sese Seko soon after becoming the Congo's head of state.

assassinations, and massacres to transform the government into a one-party dictatorship under his absolute personal control.<sup>40</sup>

The *New Nigerian* magazine called the Mobutu system “a kleptocracy that ruled the country at the pleasure of foreign powers to the disadvantage of their own people.”<sup>41</sup> In addition to relying on foreign backing to maintain his government, President Mobutu’s governing practices included ethnic manipulation, reliance on private international corporations for government functions, and indifference to the living conditions of most Congolese citizens. These were the same governing practices that characterized King Leopold’s reign eighty years before. The reemergence of these four destructive governing practices after the ONUC intervention indicated how institutionalized such practices had become in the Congo. President Mobutu ruled the Congo until 17 May 1997 when Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi attacked into the Congo and installed Laurent Kabila as the new president. Regional war broke out a year later as the nations and armed groups of central and southern Africa fought for control of the Congo’s resources and influence over the Congo’s government.

President Mobutu initially enjoyed strong public support as he promised to bring peace and stability to the war-torn country. In a December 1965 speech, he told a cheering audience in King Leopoldville’s biggest soccer stadium that because it had taken five years for the Prime Minister Lumumba and President Kasavubu to drive the country to ruin, he would need five years in office to lead it to prosperity.<sup>42</sup> Instead of improving the Congo’s standard of living in those five years, President Mobutu catered to Western interests, his upper class base, and his personal pursuit of wealth and power.<sup>43</sup> As President Mobutu catered to these elite interests, he led the Congo into a period of economic and institutional decline from 1965 to 1997.

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<sup>40</sup>Nzongola-Ntalaja, 141.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 142.

<sup>42</sup>Edgerton, 206.

<sup>43</sup>Nzongola-Ntalaja, 145-146.

In 1965, the Congo's economy was recovering from five years of political crisis. During the four-year ONUC action, many rural farmers stopped working on Belgian-run cash crop plantations. The flight of European technicians and managers led to a breakdown of the transportation network and left critical agricultural equipment without operators. Before relinquishing control of the Congo to the Lumumba government, Belgium transferred the debts of the Belgian Congo to the newly independent Republic of the Congo while retaining the Belgian monopoly on the Congo's international trade. As a result, gross domestic product, which rose at an annual rate of six percent for the previous decade, fell to pre-independence levels within two years of President Mobutu's coup. Commercial agriculture production fell by forty percent, and agriculture exports declined by fifty percent.<sup>44</sup>

While the Mobutu government faced these economic difficulties, the United States, Italy, Japan, the Federal Republic of Germany, and France sought to break Belgium's post-colonial monopoly on the Congo's international trade. President Mobutu was anxious to help them achieve their goals while consolidating his hold on the economy. Between 1966 and 1973, President Mobutu seized corporate property from private and international owners. He enacted the 1966 Bakajika Law, which established state claim to all land and mineral rights in the country. In January 1967, he nationalized the country's principal mining company and transformed it into a state enterprise called Gecamines. Between 1971 and 1973, President Mobutu renamed the country Zaire<sup>45</sup> and nationalized all foreign-owned commercial and agricultural enterprises.<sup>46</sup> The nationalization of 1966 to 1973 confiscated small and medium enterprises from Belgians, Greeks, Portuguese, Italians, Pakistanis, and West Africans.<sup>47</sup> President Mobutu's nationalization program conspicuously left other Western enterprises

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 145-152.

<sup>45</sup>This monograph will continue to refer the Zaire as the Congo.

<sup>46</sup>Nzongola-Ntalaja, 145-149.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.



untouched. He then transferred management of nationalized enterprises to his relatives and patronage network made up of Congolese politicians, senior civil servants, and merchants.

By nationalizing the Congo's economic sector and transferring control of the enterprises to his patronage network, President Mobutu built a loyal following of university graduates, military officers, and rich merchants. President Mobutu encouraged his network members to treat the assets of these companies as their personal property.<sup>48</sup> Most of the new owners had no experience in business. Within a few months, these enterprises suffered massive layoffs and shortages of basic commodities. Many of the new owners simply liquidated their assets.<sup>49</sup> Lower level state employees also enriched themselves through their official positions by postal and judicial fraud, false billing, extortion, embezzlement, padding payrolls with false names, illegal taxation, and tax fraud.<sup>50</sup> Although nationalization did not benefit the Congo's economy, it effectively placed all economic enterprises under the control of the government in a manner reminiscent of King Leopold reign. The high levels of corruption, job losses, and manipulation of Congolese citizens not employed by the state illustrated President Mobutu's indifference to the welfare of his people.

The Congo experienced a spectacular economic recovery from 1968 to 1974. Political stability in the Congo and the demand for copper created by the Vietnam War were major factors in this recovery. Gross domestic product grew at an annual rate of ten percent between 1967 and 1970 and at a rate of five percent between 1970 and 1973. President Mobutu established a very liberal investment code in 1969 to attract foreign investments. Most investment was allocated to mining, manufacturing, and services and benefited some of the major urban centers in the

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 148.

<sup>49</sup>Edgerton, 212.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., 210.

country. Agriculture, transportation, and health care received much smaller investment share and led to a continued decline in average Congolese citizen's standard of living.<sup>51</sup>

In 1975, the economy suffered another decline that continued until 1997. The decline was a direct result of President Mobutu's nationalization policy, patronage network, and lavish spending. In 1971, President Mobutu built and expensively furnished over a dozen palaces in the Congo, the French Riviera, Brussels, Switzerland, Paris, and Madrid. He transformed his rustic, seventeen hundred person home village of Gbadolite into a city of thirty-seven thousand with the country's best supply of water and electricity. Gbadolite also received television stations, telephones, medical services, a one-hundred-room hotel, luxury guesthouses, plantations, and ranches for the five thousand sheep President Mobutu imported from Venezuela.<sup>52</sup>

Despite the degradation of the Congo's economy, President Mobutu maintained firm control of the Congo's government and strong support from the United States, France, and Belgium throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Because the economic decline that began in 1975 reduced the Congo's ability to produce exports, President Mobutu relied on arrangements with international corporations to run state-owned mines. President Mobutu's reliance on international corporations and the strength of his patronage network obviated the need to fund state agencies. Government agencies could become vehicles for secessionist movements. As the economy continued to decline, President Mobutu safely abandoned expensive schools, facilities, public works, and health care, leading to a collapse of the Congo's education, sanitation, and health care systems.<sup>53</sup>

When copper prices fell in 1974, state officials brazenly stole millions of dollars from public funds. Teacher wages were so little that they could not afford to own more than two shirts. In response, teachers began to demand gifts from their boy students and sexual favors from the

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<sup>51</sup>Nzongola-Ntalaja, 148-149.

<sup>52</sup>Edgerton, 211.

<sup>53</sup>William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), 153.

girls. Less than fifty percent of the Congo's student population reached the fourth grade. Sanitation was poor throughout the country and garbage collection was nonexistent. As a result, preventable infectious and parasitic diseases accounted for fifty percent of all deaths in the Congo. AIDS spread quickly because poorly paid health-care professionals demanded a personal fee before they would provide any care.<sup>54</sup>

In 1990, President Mobutu's international backing decreased because the Congo was unable to repay loans to the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and Paris Group. Under the provisions of the Brooke Amendment, the United States Congress cut off aid to the Congo in 1991. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund broke ties with President Mobutu soon after. As financial backing for the Mobutu government declined, the United States, France, and Belgium pressured President Mobutu to begin economic and political reforms. In 1991, French President Francois Mitterrand promised that "French aid will be conditional towards authoritarian regimes and more enthusiastic for those beginning a democratic transition." The loss of international support also removed sources of clandestine funding from President Mobutu's patronage network. Throughout the 1980's, the United States and South Africa gave military and financial support to the Mobutu government to support the Unio Nacional para a Independencia Total do Angola (UNITA), an armed insurgent group opposing the Angolan government. President Mobutu used UNITA rebels to conduct clandestine diamond mining operations in the Congo's Kasai-Occidental province. The diamond-mining arrangement provided additional funding to the UNITA rebels and funding for Mobutu's patronage network. The loss of American and South African backing for this arrangement made President Mobutu less important to UNITA and reduced his control of UNITA diamond mining operations.<sup>55</sup>

The loss of international political and financial backing forced President Mobutu to make political changes. In April 1990, the Mobutu government announced the legalization of

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<sup>54</sup>Edgerton, 214.

<sup>55</sup>Reno, 156-157.

independent opposition parties. By August 1991, the opposition parties formed the Haut conseil de la Republique (HCR) and selected Etienne Tshisekedi as their candidate to challenge President Mobutu's authoritarian rule. President Mobutu and the HCR fought for control of the Congo's government from 1991 through 1994.<sup>56</sup> While engaged in this political struggle, President Mobutu maintained his grip on power by increasing his use of ethnic manipulation and his use of private firms.

While President Mobutu tried to maintain power in the face of decreasing resources, he abandoned his original patronage network and engaged in what William Reno calls warlord politics. The Congo's historic tradition of decentralized tribal governance manifested itself as a central feature in what Reno calls warlord politics. In short, the individuals, factions, and tribes that controlled mineral rich territory and mining rights owned political power. Those without control of resources had almost no voice in politics.<sup>57</sup> Such control was vital because the Mobutu government provided little or no services to economically powerless tribes and individuals. Reno discusses the politics of natural resources in the Congo and includes these activities in his explanation of warlord politics:

In these cases, rulers reject the pursuit of a broader project of creating a state that serves a collective good or even of creating institutions that are capable of developing independent perspectives and acting on behalf of interests distinct from the rulers' personal exercise of power.<sup>58</sup>

In warlord politics, national leaders intentionally weaken or destroy institutions because such institutions can empower adversaries of the ruler. President Mobutu exhibited the behaviors identified by Reno's warlord politics model.

The Mobutu government stopped the flow of the remaining government funds allocated to local, provincial, and national agencies. In 1992, the government spent less than one percent of its expenditures on social services. Only four percent of government expenditures supported

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid., 157-162.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., 148.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., 1.

domestic food production to feed Congolese communities.<sup>59</sup> As a result, the majority of government run schools, hospitals, and public works closed.<sup>60</sup> Local citizens relied upon schools and health care provided by the Catholic Church and international aid organizations. Black market sales supplemented these facilities. The absence of government services and the existence of ethnic rivalries in the eastern provinces were conditions that fostered continued growth of armed resistance groups. These armed groups received illegal weapons and supplies from the governments of Rwanda and Uganda, while the Mobutu government armed others.

In the absence of government provided services, some tribes were able to provide for their own needs. Tribes that controlled mineral rights to gold, copper, and other precious metal deposits were relatively prosperous because they could negotiate lucrative bilateral agreements with international mining corporations in the United States, Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa. However, mineral rights and the negotiation of international mining agreements were normally under the personal control of armed group leaders or even national army commanders. These individuals were the warlords of Reno's model. Warlords used their soldiers and mercenary armies to guard their mining operations from other warlords. When warlords recognized an opportunity to obtain additional mining rights owned by a rival tribe or community, they would contrive an ethnic dispute and engage in barbarous violence against the target community. In the pursuit of mining rights, armed groups massacred civilians, denied food to civilians, raided towns to draft male child soldiers, and abducted female children to carry their supplies. In terror, the community members vacated the land, leaving attacking warlords with control of the mineral rights. The warlord then occupied the territory with his mercenary soldiers or invited members of his own tribe to occupy the territory and run the mining operations.

In the contentious eastern provinces of the Congo, the use of these methods fueled ethnic divisions between Hutus and Tutsis. Application of Reno's warlord politics model illustrates how

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid., 154.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., 153.

President Mobutu was indifferent to the public well being, promoted the use of ethnic strife to control the population, and used non-governmental resources to maintain security and extract resources. Congolese government leaders exhibited and supported similar governing practices at the provincial level. These practices were reminiscent of the governing practices of King Leopold in the Congo a century earlier.

During President Mobutu's rule, each of the Congo's ten provinces had a governor appointed by the president. A primary informal function of the provincial governor was to certify the validity of bilateral mining contracts between local warlords and international mining corporations. By approving the contracts, the regional governors obscured the sometimes violent and coercive means that both the corporations and the warlords used to obtain access to mining sites. Some of the money from the bilateral contracts found its way to the provincial governor, the Congo's president, and their allies. When a particular warlord became too unruly or threatened the governor's power base, the governor would broker new bilateral mining agreements between an international mining company and a rival warlord. In doing so, competition between warlords prevented a coordinated threat to the provincial leader. At the national level, the president established personal bilateral agreements with mining companies as well. Additionally, he used international loans and humanitarian aid money to buy the loyalty of regional governors and particularly powerful warlords. This informal political network benefited the national president. Local warlords prevented the population from rebelling. By not funding governmental institutions, the president avoided empowering a minister of interior or education who could use their position to challenge the president. As long as foreign firms and mercenary armies were available, the network of warlord politics was self-perpetuating.

The Mobutu government exhibited the characteristics of Reno's model from 1992 until 1997. To maintain control of the government in the absence of foreign political and financial aid, the Mobutu government assigned new roles to his specialized security forces. In lieu of financial payment, President Mobutu provided six distinct military units with substantial latitude of action

to profit from clandestine trade. The military units dispersed to the resource rich areas of the Congo and established private mining and trade rackets. Each unit increased its own wealth while carefully guarding its operations from other units. For example, in 1992, the ten thousand troops of General Kpama Baramoto's Guard Civile established gold and diamond mining operations in the Orientale, Kasai, North Kivu and South Kivu provinces. By 1996, General Baramoto established a joint venture with the United States-based Barrick Gold Corporation to mine in Bunia. Through this joint venture, Barrick refurbished the Bunia airport, compensating for General Baramoto's inability to do so. The Bunia Airport also aided President Mobutu's external ties when the Sudanese government used the airport to ship weapons to Ugandan insurgents. By encouraging General Baramoto's mining operations in the Orientale, North Kivu and South Kivu provinces, President Mobutu interfered with the Kasai province mining operations of Tshisekedi, leader of the HCR opposition. President Mobutu's support of General Baramoto also moved clandestine diamond mining operations from UNITA control to General Baramoto's control. By encouraging the specialized military units to seize control of mining operations throughout the country, President Mobutu maintained control of the Congo.<sup>61</sup>

The weakening Congolese economy and the reduction in foreign aid left President Mobutu without resources to maintain his patronage network. He deliberately incited ethnic tensions between resource-constrained tribes in the Congo to cause them to war with one another. President Mobutu also incited ethnic and insurgent tensions in neighboring states to ensure they could not overthrow him. He did so by supporting insurgent campaigns in Angola, Rwanda, and other neighboring states. With the attention of Angola, Rwanda, and other neighboring states focused on countering insurgent threats, they had little time or resources to threaten President

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<sup>61</sup>Ibid., 159-162.

Mobutu's rule. Events following the 1994 genocide in Rwanda negated President Mobutu's ability to maintain domestic control and regional influence.<sup>62</sup>

Between April and June 1994, the Hutu-led national government of neighboring Rwanda and the Rwandan Army (FAR) massacred over eight hundred thousand Tutsis and moderate Hutus. Tutsis soon took control of the Rwandan government, causing more than one million Hutus to flee westward into the Congo.<sup>63</sup> The ex-FAR members and the former Hutu leaders of the Rwandan government became inhabitants of refugee camps in the Congo. The former Rwandan government formed Interhamwe, an armed insurgent group whose purpose was to overthrow the new Tutsi government of Rwanda. The ex-FAR and Interhamwe launched cross-border raids into Rwanda and attacked ethnic Tutsi citizens of the Congo with the tacit approval of President Mobutu. After three years of insurgent strikes against the Rwanda government and attacks on Congolese Tutsis, Rwanda and the Tutsi-controlled countries of Uganda and Burundi sent their armies into the Congo to disband the ex-FAR and Interhamwe. Seizing the opportunity provided by Rwandan, Ugandan, and Burundian military action, Angola also sent its army into the Congo in order to disband UNITA insurgents that President Mobutu supported. As these regional countries attacked into the Congo, they allied with ethnic Tutsi citizens of the Congo and other anti-President Mobutu groups. This alliance unseated President Mobutu in 1997 and installed Laurent Kabila as the new president of the Congo.<sup>64</sup> President Kabila promptly changed the name of the country from Zaire to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Although President Kabila quickly ended his partnership with the governments of Rwanda and Uganda, Hutu-Tutsi ethnic tensions continued in eastern Congo.<sup>65</sup> A year later, Rwanda, Uganda, and anti-Kabila armed groups occupied and essentially governed the eastern

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

<sup>63</sup>BBC News, Country Profile: Rwanda, 8 November 2005, Available from [http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/africa/country\\_profiles/1070265.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/1070265.stm), Internet, Accessed 24 December 2005.

<sup>64</sup>Nzongola-Ntalaja, 225-227.

<sup>65</sup>Edgerton, 219-230.



half of the Congo until 2002. Rwanda and Uganda declared a mandate to occupy the Congo to both protect their countries from cross-border rebel attacks and to protect ethnic Tutsis in the Congo from the attacks of non-Tutsi groups. The Congo's army was not strong enough to resist the Rwandan and Ugandan occupation or to control the armed groups within its territories. The weakness of the Congo's army enabled insurgent groups to find sanctuary in the Congo, and prevented the Congo government from protecting Congolese citizens from attacks by armed groups. Security concerns and ethnic tensions ensured continued Rwandan and Ugandan interference in the Congo's internal affairs until 2002.

While security and ethnic protection concerns were the stated reasons for regional intervention into the Congo, there was an important economic interest as well. The Congo's neighboring states wanted access to Congolese natural resources. President Kabila inherited President Mobutu's valuable mining network that included rebel warlords, regional and national government officials, international mining corporations, mercenary armies, and regional African governments. The military occupation of the Congo provided Rwanda, Uganda, and their supported armed groups significant influence with Congolese tribes and warlords and access to the valuable mineral mining rights of Congolese tribes. The domestic and regional competition over the Congo's natural resources again prevented the growth of effective governing practices in the Congo.

### **Interventions After ONUC (1990-1998)**

After the 1960 ONUC intervention ended, the United States, France, and Belgium continued to intervene in the Congo. They sought to prevent the Congo from becoming a communist country, to open international trade opportunities in the Congo, to ensure that unrest in the Congo did not spread to French or other European colonial territories, and to support UNITA insurgents in their campaign against the communist-leaning government of Angola. In light of these strategic aims, the Congo's history of oppressive and exploitative leadership before

1960 provided the West with an intervention opportunity. A strong, dictatorial leader in the Congo could repress popular opinion, maintain political control, and maintain friendly relations with western countries. President Mobutu was the chosen instrument to fulfill that role. Western states would incur relatively little cost in installing and supporting the Mobutu government. However, the cost to the Congo's population included terror, humanitarian crisis, destruction of the national economy, and decay of national and local bureaucratic institutions.

The next opportunity for intervention came at the end of the Cold War. Coincidentally, the declining Congolese economy made it difficult for President Mobutu to service the country's international debts. This provided an opportunity for Western countries and the international community to intervene economically in the Congo by cutting off aid to the Mobutu government until he agreed to democratic reforms. While this was a low-cost intervention, it proved insufficient to either open democratic reforms in the Congo or cause President Mobutu's demise. President Mobutu weathered international isolation by increasing his clandestine mining operations in cooperation with his military generals. In doing so, he stoked Hutu-Tutsi tensions in the eastern Congo that caused Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, and Angola to invade the Congo in 1997. This military intervention unseated President Mobutu. The cost of the African-led intervention was low to the invading countries. However, like the Western political intervention that placed President Mobutu in power, the average Congolese citizen paid heavily for the African-led military intervention war-related injuries and deaths.

President Kabila did not live up to the expectations of his Rwandan, Ugandan, and Burundian supporters. He quickly abandoned the Tutsi alliance, pocketed the influx of new international loans and business contracts that the hopeful international community granted upon his inauguration as president, and continued the clandestine mining arrangements. While President Kabila encouraged attacks against Tutsi citizens in the Congo; Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi occupied the eastern half of the Congo. President Kabila appealed to Angola, Zimbabwe, and Zambia for military assistance in exchange for mining rights. Thus began the Congo Civil

war.<sup>66</sup> There were no further interventions into the Congo until after the July 1999 Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement.

The political, economic, and military interventions into the Congo between 1964 and 1998 demonstrate the unpredictable nature of intervention. In each case, intervention appeared to be the best course of action to bring about stability. However, the institutionalized governing practices of the Congo caused unexpected outcomes in each case. When the belligerents in the 1998 Congo Civil War signed the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, the United Nations prepared to take a turn at stabilizing the Congo. By this time, the international community, led by the United States, simply wanted to end the violence of the Congo Civil War. Too many countries were involved in the fighting and it needed to end. So began the 1999 United Nations intervention into the Congo.

### **Opportunities and MONUC (1999-2005)**

The United Nations intervention into the Congo followed the outbreak of the Second Congo War in 1998. This war was the widest interstate war in modern African history and directly involved nine African nations and approximately twenty armed groups. After more than a year of fighting, the presidents of South Africa, Zambia, and Libya helped the belligerents to negotiate a ceasefire agreement. While the United Nations recognized the violence in the Congo, the international body did not intervene until the ceasefire agreement was completed. On 10 July 1999, the governments of the Congo, Rwanda, Uganda, Namibia, Angola, and Zimbabwe signed the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. By the end of August, the two most powerful rebel groups, the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD) and the Movement for the Liberation of the Congo (MLC), also signed the agreement. The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement called on the signatories to cease hostilities and withdraw foreign armies from the Congo. It also called for an Inter-Congolese Dialogue--a process to form a new Congolese government. Finally, it formed a Joint

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<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 223-230.

Military Council to conduct peacekeeping operations until the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping force.

On 15 July 1999, the United Nations Security Council approved formation of a Chapter VII peacekeeping force to help the belligerents implement the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and protect humanitarian and human rights concerns. The mission had three phases. The first two phases sought to establish conditions for the deployment of United Nations peacekeeping forces. In Phase I (Liaison), ninety United Nations military personnel and necessary civilian political, humanitarian, and administrative staff were sent to the region. They were to serve as liaison officers to the national capitals and the rear military headquarters of the main belligerents.<sup>67</sup> Phase II (Military Observers) entailed deployment of five hundred and fifty military observers to the Congo and, if required, to the neighboring states. Two thousand three hundred armed personal guards supported the observers by securing equipment, facilities, and supplies.<sup>68</sup> Phase III (Peacekeeping Operations) envisioned the deployment of a peacekeeping force to assist the parties in implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. The peacekeeping force would also strengthen the peace process and protect United Nations personnel in the Congo.<sup>69</sup>

The United Nations intervention involved many regional and international organizations. The United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) led the intervention. MONUC consisted of military personnel and civilian experts in the fields of human rights, humanitarian affairs, public information, medical support, child protection, political affairs, and administrative support.<sup>70</sup> The chief of mission controlled MONUC, and served as the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General to the Congo. A

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<sup>67</sup>United Nations Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Preliminary Deployment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (New York, NY: United Nations, 15 July 1999), para 16.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., Para 76.

<sup>69</sup>United Nations Security Council, Second Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Preliminary Deployment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (New York, NY: United Nations, 1 November 1999), Para 45.

<sup>70</sup>United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 1279* (New York, NY: United Nations, 30 November 1999), Para 4.

military general served as the force commander and reported directly to the chief of mission. A police commissioner also reported directly to the chief of mission. The United Nations Offices for Human Rights, Refugees, Humanitarian Affairs, and other United Nations organizations coordinated their in-country operations with MONUC. At times, the United Nations Secretary General, the United Nations Security Council, the Organization for African Unity, and several regional and international governments performed important diplomatic functions. These organizations were essential to reaching the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and moving the Congo toward stability.

The primary mechanism for reconciliation in the Congo was the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. The Inter-Congolese Dialogue brought together representatives of the Congo government, armed rebel groups, civil organizations, and opposition political parties to develop a framework for a transitional government of national unity.<sup>71</sup> The process was independent of the formal United Nations mission and run by two neutral facilitators, the former Botswanan president Ketumile Masire, and the then South African President Thabo Mbeki.<sup>72</sup> MONUC provided direct assistance to the Inter-Congolese Dialogue neutral facilitators, which enhanced their access to United Nations agencies and experts.<sup>73</sup>

President Kabila did not support the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. Only armed groups that were signatories of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement could participate in these talks to form a new government. This excluded the Mai Mai armed group and several other groups that supported President Kabila. Without representation from these groups, President Kabila would be in a weak position in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. The Kabila government used police and army units to prevent delegates from attending Inter-Congolese Dialogue sessions. President Kabila's lack of

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<sup>71</sup>Refugee International, *Inconclusive Outcome to the Inter-Congolese Dialogue*, 6 May 2005, Available from <http://refintl.org/content/article/detail/1390/?PHPSESSID=b0e0abe9697f4ff6f48477fa4ca78787>, Internet, Accessed on 12 January 2006.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid.

<sup>73</sup>Jakkie Cilliers and Mark Malan, *Peacekeeping in the DRC: MONUC and the Road to Peace*, October 2001, Available from <http://www.iss.co.za/Pubs/Monographs/No66/CONTENTS.HTML#Anchor-49950>, Internet, Accessed on 12 January 2006.

lack of commitment to the Lusaka Ceasefire agreement was no incentive for Rwanda and Uganda to withdraw their forces from the Congo. Instead, the armies of Rwanda and Uganda and aligned armed groups in the Congo fought each other in the Orientale province city of Kisangani to control the Congo's natural resources. Armed groups and foreign armies committed ceasefire violations in Kisangani, Pweto, and elsewhere also to compete for control of natural resources. In response, the United Nations Security Council passed several resolutions condemning the ceasefire violations, calling for the immediate withdrawal of Rwandan and Ugandan troops from Kisangani, and condemning the Congo government's lack of cooperation with the Inter-Congolese Dialogue.

The first MONUC personnel arrived in September 1999. They established liaison with the belligerent country capitals and rear military headquarters. Through these contacts, they established safe travel routes for humanitarian relief convoys, directed the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights investigators to known and suspected sites of massacres and other atrocities, and helped child protection experts reduce recruitment of child soldiers. MONUC observed poor humanitarian conditions, human rights violations, continued fighting, and resistance to the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. These observations indicated that preconditions for United Nations Phase III (Peacekeeping) troop deployments were not achieved. The United Nations Secretary General emphasized that the deployment would be contingent on a number of steps from the belligerents. First, they had to identify the number, location, and withdrawal routes of foreign military personnel and armed groups within the Congo. Next, the governments of the Congo and Rwanda had to arrange for disengagement, disarmament, relocation, and relocation activities for armed groups. Both countries also had to guarantee the civil rights and economic integration of the demobilized groups returning to their hometowns. Finally, the Lusaka signatories had to cooperate fully with MONUC military and logistical operations as well as

humanitarian, human rights, and child protection activities.<sup>74</sup> MONUC, the Congo government, and the Joint Military Council worked to meet these preconditions. Meanwhile, the United Nations sought to hold the neighboring governments accountable for the violence of their armies. The United Nations demanded that Rwanda and Uganda pay reparations to the residents of Kisangani for damage to property and for loss of life at the hands of their armies.

In June 2000, the United Nations focused attention on the illegal exploitation of the Congo's resources and identified it as a root cause of country's instability. The United Nations Security Council established an expert panel to collect information on all activities of illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth in the Congo. The panel also analyzed links between the illegal exploitation of natural resources and continuation of the conflict. The five panel members came from the Ivory Coast, Cameroon, the United States, Switzerland, and Senegal.<sup>75</sup> The investigation named a number government officials and corporate executives in the Congo, Rwanda, Uganda, and other countries that perpetuated illegal exploitation. The investigation and its associated media attention made it slightly more difficult for mining corporations, government officials, and warlord participants to sell illegally exploited resources on world markets. However, the investigative panel concluded that punitive measures to curb the illegal exploitation and trade would encourage continued exploitation by criminal organizations and lead to an increase in such activities.<sup>76</sup> While United Nations resolutions called for the creation of internal and external controls,<sup>77</sup> available literature does not point to the formation of such controls.

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<sup>74</sup>United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 1376* (New York, NY: United Nations, 9 November 2001), Para 12, 2-3.

<sup>75</sup>United Nations Security Council, Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (New York, NY: United Nations, 12 April 2001).

<sup>76</sup>United Nations Security Council. Final Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (New York, NY: United Nations, 16 October 2002), Para 155.

<sup>77</sup>United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 1565* (New York, NY: United Nations, 1 October 2004), Para 22.

Security and regional reconciliation conditions changed significantly in 2001. On 16 January 2001, two bodyguards assassinated the Congo's President, Laurent Kabila.<sup>78</sup> On 17 January 2001 government ministers, senior military officials, and the transitional parliament appointed Kabila's son, Major General Joseph Kabila, as President and Commander of the Congo's armed forces.<sup>79</sup> President Joseph Kabila displayed stronger commitment to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement requirements than his father did. With President Kabila's support, MONUC and the Joint Military Council helped negotiate the Kampala and Harare withdrawal agreements between the governments of the Congo, Uganda, and Rwanda. These agreements scheduled partial foreign army withdrawals for March 2001.<sup>80</sup> Before the January withdrawal agreements, the Ugandan army defeated the Allied Democratic Forces, an Islamic militia that had found sanctuary in the Congo and had conducted attacks against the Ugandan government. The defeat of the Allied Democratic Forces coupled with President Kabila's support for the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement encouraged Uganda to withdraw two of its battalions from the Congo.<sup>81</sup> The uninvited military presence of Rwanda and Uganda was ending.<sup>82</sup>

Although the withdrawal agreements reduced foreign military presence, they, nevertheless, increased armed group activities. Ugandan and Rwandan force withdrawals removed significant logistical and operational support from the armed groups operating in the Congo. Additionally, the armed groups rejected the emergence of Major General Kabila as head of state. In response, the armed groups began to cooperate with each other and consolidate their

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<sup>78</sup>BBC News, Death Sentences for 'Kabila Killers,' 7 January 2003, Available from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/2635295.stm>, Internet, Accessed 24 on December 2005.

<sup>79</sup>United Nations Security Council, Sixth Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Preliminary Deployment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (New York, NY: United Nations, 12 February 2001), para 5, 1.

<sup>80</sup>United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 1341* (New York, NY: United Nations, 22 February 2001), 2-3.

<sup>81</sup>United Nations Security Council, Sixth Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Preliminary Deployment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, para 34, 5.

<sup>82</sup>*Ibid.*, para 5, 1.



operations.<sup>83</sup> MONUC and the Congo government relied heavily on troops from Angola, Namibia, and Zimbabwe to help counter the consolidating armed groups.<sup>84</sup> This led the Congo's army and allied forces into several confrontations with armed groups in the eastern provinces.

The 2001 security situation continued to develop while MONUC and the Congo government moved forward with local and regional reconciliation. The Kabila government expressed its willingness to proceed with the Inter-Congolese Dialogue under the aegis of the neutral facilitator.<sup>85</sup> At the regional level, and for the first time in many decades, the Congo government opened bilateral talks with neighboring Burundi and Rwanda on the subject of armed insurgent groups that found sanctuary in the Congo.<sup>86</sup> The United Nations Secretary General and the United States government hosted the talks in New York. These voluntary actions of the regional governments demonstrated improved regional commitment to security and reconciliation. The United Nations Secretary General concluded that the prerequisites for Phase III (Peacekeeping) operations were met.<sup>87</sup> In response to the Secretary-General's recommendation, the United Nations Security Council authorized the transition to Phase III (Peacekeeping) operations. Additionally, the United Nations formed a MONUC police component to assess police capabilities in the country and formed a MONUC integrated civilian-military section to plan disengagement, disarmament, relocation, and reintegration operations.

MONUC peacekeeping forces began operating in the Congo in 2002. As they arrived, government and allied armies continued to fight against armed groups in the eastern provinces. The RCD seized the southeastern towns of Moliro and Pweto in violation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. The first MONUC peacekeeping troops in country deployed to these two locations

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<sup>83</sup>Ibid., para 12-13, 2-3.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid., para 6-7, 1-2.

<sup>85</sup>United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 1341*, Para 16, 4.

<sup>86</sup>Ibid., para 23, 5.

<sup>87</sup>United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 1376*, 1.

and monitored armed group activities.<sup>88</sup> Although RCD did not comply with United Nations demands for their withdrawal, they did guarantee the safety of MONUC peacekeeping observers. The presence of neutral peacekeeping forces among the warring parties helped to reduce fighting and improve incentives for diplomatic solutions.

MONUC also deployed peacekeeping troops to Kisangani, Kindu, and Kamina to begin disengagement, disarmament, relocation, and reintegration operations.<sup>89</sup> These operations disarmed groups that voluntarily surrendered their weapons. With the continuing withdrawal of Rwandan and Ugandan troops, many armed groups chose to disarm rather than consolidate into the larger armed groups. Another incentive for disarmament was the Congo government's announcement that it would no longer sponsor armed groups in the Congo. President Kabila ended support to armed groups as a gesture of support to the Lusaka Agreement. Additionally, the withdrawal of foreign troops obviated the need for armed groups to augment Congolese security forces. A round of bilateral talks with Rwanda provided additional incentives for armed group disarmament.

Rwandan troop withdrawals accelerated markedly with the 30 July 2002 signing of the Pretoria agreement.<sup>90</sup> Rwanda agreed to withdraw all of its remaining forces from the Congo. In exchange, the Congo government pledged to disarm ex-FAR and Interhamwe groups attacking Rwanda from bases in the Congo and the anti-Rwanda insurgent group, the Forces Democratiques de Liberation du Rwanda. Additionally, the agreement invited MONUC to continue disarmament and demobilization operations and to begin relocation operations. The South African President and the United Nations Secretary General had a significant role in reaching the agreement. The withdrawal of Rwandan and Ugandan troops reduced the direct

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<sup>88</sup>United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 1399* (New York, NY: United Nations, 19 March 2002), 1-2.

<sup>89</sup>United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 1417* (New York, NY: United Nations, 14 June 2002), Para 9, 3.

<sup>90</sup>Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Pretoria Agreement, Available from <http://www.state.gov/t/ac/csbn/rd/22637.htm>, Internet, Accessed on 21 March 2006.

participation of foreign armies in the exploitation of the Congo's resources. However, "the necessary networks [had] already become deeply embedded to ensure that the illegal exploitation continue[d], independent of the physical presence of the foreign armies."<sup>91</sup>

The security and reconciliation advances of 2002 culminated with the 16 December signing of the Global and All Inclusive Agreement.<sup>92</sup> This agreement defined the structure and powers of a new transitional government that would share power between the existing president, the RCD, the MLC, and unarmed political opposition groups. It also established a number of new institutions. They included the Independent Electoral Commission, the National Watchdog on Human Rights, the Media Authority, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the Committee on Ethics and the Fight against Corruption. These institutions were independent of the Congo government. They enhanced the Congo's governing capacity by organizing national elections, increasing awareness and compliance in human rights, fostering ethical administrative and economic practices, and ensuring access to impartial media.

In late 2002 and early 2003, confrontations intensified in the Ituri district along the border with Rwanda, North Kivu, and South Kivu.<sup>93</sup> Diplomatic envoys from Angola, South Africa, and the United Nations tried to persuade armed groups in the eastern provinces to rejoin the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, disarm, and comply with withdrawal agreements. MONUC increased its human rights and peacekeeping presence in the Ituri district while the United Nations deployed an Interim Emergency Force consisting of infantry battalions to Bunia to secure the city and separate the warring parties. The emergency force worked in close coordination with MONUC. In 2003, the United Nations Security Council also imposed an arms embargo against

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<sup>91</sup>United Nations Security Council, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Para 150.

<sup>92</sup>President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Global and All Inclusive Agreement, Available from <http://www.reliefweb.int/library/documents/2002/gov-cod-16dec-02.pdf>, Internet, Accessed on 14 December 2005.

<sup>93</sup>United Nations Security Council, Second Special Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (New York, NY: United Nations 27 May 2003), para 9-14, 3-4.

the armed groups in the Ituri district, North Kivu, and South Kivu that were not parties to the Inter-Congolese Dialogue.<sup>94</sup> The arms embargo pressured armed groups to accelerate the disarmament process.

In June 2003, amid the violence in the eastern provinces, the Congo established a transitional government.<sup>95</sup> In accordance with the Global and All Inclusive Agreement, President Kabila, maintained his post. Four vice-presidents represented the two main rebel groups, supporters of the government, and non-violent political opponents of the government. The transitional government was to remain in place until national elections to approve a new constitution took place in 2005 and presidential and parliamentary elections took place in 2006. MONUC provided technical support to the transitional government. MONUC also enhanced the security of the transitional government by contributing peacekeeping troops to the secure the Congo's capital city, and by urging the new government to integrate its police forces. The United Nations authorized MONUC to increase its support to the transitional government. MONUC received authority to deter violent threats to the Congo's political process. MONUC supported the Independent Electoral Commission by transporting election materials throughout the Congo. MONUC also took opportunities to train community leaders on good governance and open economic practices.

In 2004 and 2005, the United Nations continued the arms embargo while and MONUC focused its monitoring efforts in the violent eastern provinces. The Congo government demonstrated increased security capability, employing its first integrated army brigade to reduce the violence.<sup>96</sup> MONUC simultaneously encouraged the Congolese government to continue to improve security capabilities by integrating the army and police forces, ensuring adequate

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<sup>94</sup>United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 1493* (New York, NY: United Nations, 28 July 2003), Para 20.

<sup>95</sup>*Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>96</sup>United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 1522* (New York, NY: United Nations, 15 January 2004), 1-2.

payment to soldiers and officers, providing better logistics to its security forces, and assuming more responsibility for disarmament, disengagement, relocation, and resettlement operations. Indicating the improving capacity of the Congo's army, MONUC called on the government to disarm foreign combatants in the eastern provinces that threatened the governments of Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi.

The MONUC action helped the Congo's government to enhance security capabilities, achieve agreements to resolve regional security concerns, foster reconciliation between armed and unarmed political groups, establish political and social institutions, and establish a representative government. The MONUC intervention also left many problems unresolved in the Congo. The government of the Congo still relies on international organizations to provide social services to its citizens. Hundreds of thousands of refugees remain abroad due to the poor social and security conditions in the country. The economy is still in recovery. Armed groups continue to threaten security in the eastern provinces. The domestic and regional politics of resource exploitation continue as a major driver of instability.

The MONUC intervention had the broad mission of implementing the Lusaka Ceasefire Accord while protecting humanitarian and human rights concerns. The intervention capitalized on the many opportunities provided by the Congo's governance development process. Three especially valuable opportunities included the rise of Joseph Kabila to the presidency, support for the Intra-Congolese Dialogue, and the willingness of Rwanda and Uganda to withdraw their armies in exchange for the Kabila government's promise to disarm insurgent groups. The assassination of Laurent Kabila and the rise of Joseph Kabila comprised an unexpected opportunity that enabled significant steps toward stability in the Congo. Joseph Kabila's support of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue and willingness to address security concerns with Rwanda and Uganda were pivotal to the withdrawal of foreign armies. Rwandan and Ugandan support for the Intra-Congolese Dialogue helped convince armed groups in the Congo to participate in the talks and form a transition government.

## Conclusion

In the course of the Congo's political development from 1700 to 2005, Congolese leaders developed four harmful governing practices. These governing practices began under King Leopold in 1885 and continued under Belgian colonial rule, under President Mobutu's dictatorship, under the short administration of President Laurent Kabila, and under the current administration of President Joseph Kabila. Successive Congolese administrations have returned to these governing practices in response to the country's persistent challenges. The Congo relies on the international community expertise to run its economy and many sectors of its government. Numerous tribal conflicts divide the Congo's population, preventing the unified public consensus needed to address the country's many political, economic, and social problems. The national interests of Western powers, particularly the United States, France, and Belgium, have actively prevented the Congo from developing stable and representative government. The national interests of the Congo's neighboring states have likewise prevented stable and representative government from forming in the Congo. Over a century of irresponsible government has left the Congo with an underdeveloped security capability and an economy that does not adequately meet the needs of its people. Dependence on foreign political support, dependence on private corporations to perform government functions, manipulation of tribal differences to maintain control, and indifference to the living conditions of Congolese citizens continues to characterize Congolese government's response to the Congo's problems.

Well-intentioned interventions into the Congo have failed to improve governance. On the contrary, political, economic, and military interventions from 1960 to 2005 have pursued the national interests of the intervening states to the detriment of the Congo's welfare. In each intervention, the international community did not achieve a consensus on how to enable the Congo government to address its political, economic, and social challenges. In the end, each intervening state entered into competition with domestic Congolese political figures to determine the future political direction of the Congo. United States support for the rise of President Mobutu

and Rwandan support to the rise of President Kabila enabled dictatorial and self-serving political figures to control the national government. In both cases, the political figures representing the choice of the Congo's population were unable to compete successfully against despotic leaders supported by foreign governments. It seems that the Congo's political development will continue along its present course until a strong Congolese government is in the national interest of a strong Western or African power.

The 1999 United Nations intervention has achieved more success than past interventions. During the intervention, foreign armies voluntarily withdrew from the Congo. Leaders of armed groups chose to disarm their organizations and join the political process. The Congo held its first democratic elections in December 2005 where they ratified a new constitution. The transitional government established in 2003 will hold elections for the president and the congress in the summer of 2006. While impressive, these accomplishments occurred despite the United Nations intervention, not necessarily because of it. President Laurent Kabila did not support the Lusaka Agreement and did not cooperate with the MONUC intervention. His assassination and his replacement by his son turned out to be the best opportunity the Congo has had since 1960. President Kabila's support of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, his willingness to find solutions to the security concerns of Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi, and his willingness to end support to armed groups operating in the Congo improved the country's security conditions and enabled a transitional government to emerge. So far, the interests of the United States, France, and Belgium support the Kabila administration. However, the Kabila administration and MONUC still have to address the illegal exploitation of the Congo's resources. This continues to be a major source of continued violence in the Congo's eastern provinces and continues to prevent recovery of the Congo's economy.

The 1960 and 1999 United Nations actions in the Congo show that interventions begin with an international consensus on the need to end violence in the host country. Once that objective is achieved, competing state interests make it difficult to achieve a consensus on future

intervention objectives. This lack of consensus prevents meaningful international action to improve the host nation's governance, and allows the underlying causes of a country's instability to continue unabated. In such an environment, the success of the failing state government rests in large part in the ability of the United States, the European Union, and the United Nations to lead the international community in forming a consensus for repairing the failing state's government. If these leaders of the international community fail to achieve such a consensus, the millions of people living in failing states will continue to suffer, and failing states will continue to threaten international security. The ambassadors, joint commanders, and other interagency leaders responsible for executing interventions into failing states must recognize and adapt to the ever-changing guidance that results from efforts to achieve international consensus.



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